

**WEEK THIRTY-ONE: “Understanding Your Shape”**  
**DAY ONE: “Applying Your Abilities”**

**Read:** 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 (*Freedom in Christ Bible*, p. 1318)

**Read:** *Purpose-Driven Life*, pp. 241 to middle 243

**Reflect:** What are our “natural” abilities, in other words, what are you naturally good at?

**Dig:** According to this passage in 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, what are the three ways that God works by the Spirit?

What does that tell you about the variety of ways that God works?

Is a natural ability also from God?

According to verse 11 of this chapter, whose wisdom is behind who receives which gifts and workings of the Spirit?

Since God determines how many and what kind of gifts you receive, should there be any jealousy or comparisons?

**Apply:** Since God gave you your natural abilities, ask him to give you a spirit of thankfulness for what he gave you. Note ways that you can use that ability today in your place of work and also note here how you can use that ability in your church. Now ask God to give you opportunities to be joyful in serving him.

WEEK THIRTY-ONE: **“Understanding Your Shape”**

DAY TWO: **“What I Am Able to Do, God Wants Me to Do”**

**Read:** 1 Peter 4:10-11 (*Freedom in Christ Bible*, p. 1454)

**Read:** *Purpose-Driven Life*, bottom of p. 243 to middle of p. 244

**Reflect:** What motivates you to keep going when a task is difficult? In terms of serving God, what gives you joy?

**Dig:** According to this text, does every Christian have at least one spiritual gift?

According to verse 10, what is the purpose of the gifts we have and what comes from God through our spiritual gifts?

What spiritual gifts do you know (or think maybe) you have been given?

According to the close of this text, where should the emphasis lie in any gift-conscious (charismatic) church?

**Apply:** Since we are called to “eagerly desire spiritual gifts” (1 Cor. 14:1), what spiritual gift are you asking God to give to you? Eagerly desire that gift right now through prayer to God.

**WEEK THIRTY-ONE:     “Understanding Your Shape”**  
**DAY THREE:             “Using Your Personality”**

**Read:** Romans 12:3-8 (*Freedom in Christ Bible*, p. 1295)

**Read:** *Purpose-Driven Life*, p. 244, section entitled “Using your personality”

**Reflect:** Do you tend to think more highly of yourself than you ought to or do you tend to think less of yourself?

**Dig:** How does God urge us to think of ourselves? See Romans 12:3.

What do verses 4-5 tell you about the variety that God has provided?

How many times is the word “grace” used in these verses (3-8)?

What does that teach you about the use of gifts and even your personality?

Since our personalities (as created gifts of God) affect the way we use our gifts, how does your personality affect the way God’s gifts are used in you? For example, do you tend to be an extrovert or an introvert? Give examples.

What other ways has God formed your personality to shape how his gifts are used in you?

**Apply:** Since you minister in a manner consistent with the personality God gave you, ask God to give you a spirit of contentment with that personality and yet also ask him to hone that personality so that his gifts can be used even more.

**WEEK THIRTY-ONE:      “Understanding Your Shape”**  
**DAY FOUR:                “Employing Your Experiences”**

**Read:** 2 Corinthians 1:1-7 (*Freedom in Christ Bible*, p. 1328)

**Read:** *Purpose-Driven Life*, middle of p. 246 to p. 248

**Reflect:** What painful experiences have you had that turn out to be helpful for you in relating to others who are going through difficult times?

**Dig:** How many times is the word “comfort” used in this passage?

According to verses 3-4, what is the reason that God comforts us?

According to verse 6, what is this comfort supposed to produce in us?

What does that tell you about whether comfort has much to do with “being comfortable” or avoiding suffering?

According to 2 Corinthians 4:7-10, what is the reason that God often allows our finest hour to be when we are weakest?

How have you experienced this truth in your own life?

**Apply:** What will you do with what you have been through? Since we are urged to not waste our pain, how can you use your painful experiences to help others?

WEEK THIRTY-ONE:     **“Understanding Your Shape”**  
DAY FIVE:             **“Nobody Else Can Be Me”**

Using the “**Lectio Divina**” method of Bible study (see page 3 of this booklet), **meditate on this scripture:**

**“God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other, passing on to others God’s many kinds of blessings.” 1 Peter 4:10 (LB)**

*Lectio divina* (a Latin expression which means Sacred reading) is done in three stages:

- ◆ *reading*: you read the passage slowly and reverentially, allowing the words to sink into your consciousness; after you have memorized the text, write down one word which strikes you and draws your attention and note why you chose that word.
- ◆ *meditation*: you allow the passage to stir up memories within you, so that you recognize in it your own experience or that of people who have touched your life; write down memories of events or conversations or other scripture passages.
- ◆ *prayer*: you allow the meditation to lead you to prayer - thanksgiving, humility, and petition. Write out a prayer based on the passage.